

MR. JUSTMAN: Good morning. I'm Mesa County Commissioner John Justman. I want to welcome all the BLM people to Grand Junction and all the people -- the citizens here that are here to have their input today. Coal mining has been a very important industry for Western Colorado for many years. And the regulatory impacts on it directly affects Mesa County. This industry has historically created hundreds of jobs directly and many more indirectly through the stimulation of general economic growth. As an economic and commercial hub for the region, Mesa County experiences the benefits of this development. Recent mining job losses has had a severe and negative impact on this region's economy. A variety of factors, including State and Federal regulatory pressure, obstructive legal actions from special interest group, and unwise court rulings have resulted in the loss of jobs, income, workforce, and revenue for our region. The railroad has I don't know how many engines parked down here from -- because of the coal industry and lack of production. The coal industry has a strong record of responsible mining operations, compliance with all State and Federal requirements, and reclamation activities in our region. North Fork coal is some of the cleanest in the country and forms a crucial component of our State's energy mix. This resource is critical to helping keep energy prices affordable for our counties, families, and businesses. In the wintertime in Mesa County, 20 percent of our people are on energy assistance of some sort. If this gets shut down, are we going to be 50 or 70 percent of us on energy assistance? And where is that money coming from? We are all short of money on all government levels. It's interesting to me that recently in the paper there was an article how in some part of Canada when they went away from coal, their electric rates went up 300 percent. Germany had a project here a few years ago where they got rid of their nuclear and coal plants and were going to rely on wind and solar. And now they have energy poverty where people pay 10 percent of their household income for their energy bill -- for their household [indiscernible]. And that is not going to work well. Why do you think BMW relocated their manufacturing plant to America? Energy cost. The more energy we consume, the higher your standard of living. Look around the world. You can go to Africa. They have very little energy production and a very low standard of living. Mesa County has a mineral and

energy resource master plan. The overall [indiscernible] goal is create and maintain a balance between present and future resource development and use. Supporting goals. Minimizing negative impacts on resource extraction, development, use, and protecting resources from incompatible land uses. Includes the energy resource atlas with [indiscernible] opportunities. And it shows where the overlays of coal, coal bed [indiscernible], and other natural resources are located within our County. Thank you for having this opportunity to speak.